

munity, and bacteriology may also with advantage be included in her studies. Do you say that this is too much to require of her, and that you like your girl to be practical? Then, oh mother! see to it that she can turn out a room, that she knows how to handle a broom, to keep glass and china dainty and bright, and that she can cook an appetizing meal. None of these accomplishments, as a rule, does the daughter of the domestic woman possess. They all have to be taught her in the time which should be devoted to special training. See to it, moreover, that she is expert with her needle. The modern girl, as a rule, is not. Yet she must be deft-handed if she is to pad splints properly, to prepare the many dressings now required in hospitals, and to keep ward linen in good order. In short, give her a thoroughly practical education, and when she enters a nurse-training school she will be able to profit to the full by the professional education she receives, and go on to higher things. Is it too much to hope that, if she aspire to the superintendence of a large nurse-training school, in days to come she will need a university degree as well as a teacher's diploma? Training-schools for nurses are essentially educational centres, and all the prizes in the educational world are held by women having a university degree or its equivalent. If the authorities of our great nurse-training schools let it be known that, other things being equal, candidates for the post of matron holding a university degree would have precedence, they would not only eliminate many candidates from a lengthy list, but would also obtain a woman of culture—surely a great desideratum—as their superintendent of nursing, and, further, they would place their nursing-school on its rightful plane, namely, on the educational one.—MARGARET BUREAY, in *British Journal of Nursing*.

*To the Editor of Charities:*

During the past year a number of different private hospitals of the city have been reported as in great financial straits, due largely to the increased cost of supplies and the considerable expense incident to the installation of modern hospital appliances. It is stated in this connection that the second largest item in the expense of a modern hospital is the cost of training nurses, as under the present arrangement in most public and private hospitals a nurse in training receives maintenance and a pittance of from eight to fifteen dollars per month for clothing, books, and 'incidentals'. In view of the increased number of applications for admission to the best training-schools in the city, the better remuneration paid nurses in private practice at the present time, and the financial condition of the hospitals, it would seem timely to consider whether any saving might be effected in the cost of the nurses' training-schools without impairing the standing and efficiency of these schools. If the small allowance given each nurse for incidentals could be dispensed with, the total saving to a training-school of seventy-five nurses would be from seven thousand to eight thousand dollars per year.

If this argument from economy were the only one in favor of this proposition, the wisdom of the change would be exceedingly doubtful, but it is also urged that this change would place the training-schools on the footing of an educational rather than a charitable institution, and would have the effect of raising the standard of the school and increasing the independence of the students. Now that nursing is recognized as a profession and attracts women who sometimes have either means or social position or both, it is possible that the small monthly stipend could be dispensed with in most instances. There would probably be a

few women in each school giving evidence of ability to do good work as nurses who would need the present honorarium, but these cases might perhaps be provided for through scholarships given by individuals or the school, as is the custom in educational institutions.

The proposition advanced for discussion, then, is this: (a) to regard the training-schools for nurses as educational institutions primarily, giving professional instruction, which, like that of our colleges and universities, is to be paid for by the recipient, although it cannot be calculated accurately in terms of money, and (b) to abolish all features which savor of the charitable attitude towards those availing themselves of the educational opportunities offered by these schools.

WILLIAM B. BECK.

**NURSING AS A PROFESSION.**—In our issue of July 2 reference was made to the movement which is now well under way of providing further preliminary training for those who intend to take up the work of nursing. With this movement, as we then implied, has naturally come a tendency on the part of the leaders in the work of nursing and others to claim for their calling a distinct place as a profession. We suggested that it seemed to us questionable whether nursing, as ordinarily understood, could be placed in the category of the liberal professions, but implied that in the nature of its work it was rather to be regarded simply as a "calling." This question must sooner or later be definitely answered. If nursing is to be regarded as a liberal profession, it must naturally claim the privileges which go with this designation, the most natural of which is to advance very far beyond the stage which it has as yet attained.

In this connection we are glad to call attention to a letter on this subject which appeared in our issue of July 16, in which the writer took the position that nursing from its very nature could not be regarded as a liberal profession. He alluded to the fact that the essence of a profession is progress, and that the work of nursing does not permit of such development. We are inclined to agree wholly with this view of the question. While perfectly willing to grant that it is altogether probable that a class of persons will arise from the ranks of nurses who will occupy some sort of a middle position between the physician and his patient, we nevertheless are strongly of the opinion that these persons will not be nurses and will not represent the plain drudgery of nursing, as is at present the case.

A man of much acumen, himself a physician, once remarked to us that the future of medical practice would probably be that physicians would become consultants and that nurses would become essentially practising physicians. That we are still far from this state of affairs is apparent; nevertheless, there are many things pointing in the direction of the progress of nurses beyond the limits of their chosen calling into those which have heretofore been regarded as the domain of the physician. We are not inclined to regard this by any means as an unmitigated evil. On the contrary, it seems probable to us that many of the procedures which the physician in the past regarded as his prerogative may be as well, if not better, done by a carefully trained person of wide experience, whether man or woman, but what we do claim is that this function goes quite beyond our conception of nursing, which, as we understand it, is simply and solely to take care of the physical and mental wants of the sick under the direct supervision of a physician.

The present state of affairs is certainly in a measure due to the attitude of the profession itself. It has been shown that women trained as nurses are capable